



September 16, 1982

82-130

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first of three articles about Southern Baptist chaplains at the U.S. military academies.)

U.S. Naval Academy Focus
Of Baptist's Peace Effort

AB
By Michael Tutterow

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (BP)--Richard Bumpass is a pacifist who feels at home in a military world.

As director of Baptist student ministries at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Bumpass unapologetically emphasizes New Testament teachings on peace and non-violence.

But Bumpass distinguishes between what he terms a "passifist" and a "pacifist." A passifist, he explained views peacemaking passively, laying down arms and waiting for the enemy to come. But a pacifist "must be an evangelist who picks up the New Testament and goes to witness to the enemy."

Bumpass is not out to change midshipmen's career plans through his emphasis on peace. Instead, he said, "We have a responsibility to inculcate compassion in our Christian officers. We're admonished to pray for our enemies," he pointed out. "We're not told to destroy our enemies, but to love them. The pathway of the Christian life is a way of love.

"One of the great emotional facts midshipmen must deal with is that the purpose of the academy is to produce officers of the Navy that, when called upon, can inflict the maximum number of casualties upon the enemy. We help the young men and women understand that force must be tempered with compassion."

Bumpass believes emphasizing New Testament teachings on peace moves the possibility of world peace closer to reality. But with midshipmen facing a barrage of academic, physical, mental and emotional pressures, Bumpass focuses primarily on personal and interpersonal peace.

"Midshipmen are purposely stressed," he explained. "Their future decisions will be made under stress so they are taught to think clearly and precisely under stress."

Through Baptist Student Union Bumpass helps alleviate academy pressures, providing students a "place where they can get away" from rigid school routines. By the end of the first month each plebe who expresses a Baptist preference receives a personal visit, either from Bumpass or a BSU upperclassman.

Following the plebes' two-month training and orientation, Bumpass kicks off the school year with a beach party. The full day of eating and playing offers plebes their first break and forms the nucleus for BSU.

During the rest of the year Bumpass leads a group of midshipmen in an hour of Bible study each Tuesday. The number varies, he says, depending on whether academy-related meetings are scheduled during the Tuesday evening time slot allotted for club activities. More than one guest speaker or program has been cancelled by a last-minute schedule change, recalled Bumpass.

Bumpass also personally "disciples" some midshipmen and encourages them to form similar ties with other students. BSU activities help Bumpass perform "retaining, gaining and training" ministries, "keeping Baptists Baptists" and equipping midshipmen to be "active, intelligent lay leaders in their churches." Off-campus projects, like mission trips to New York City for housing renovation, give midshipmen opportunities to practice social ministry.

Despite 12 years as a Baptist campus minister at the academy and official recognition as an academy chaplain, Bumpass' civilian status denies him access to most areas of the academy complex. Dorm visitation is also prohibited, limiting Bumpass' contact with midshipmen to group events, phone calls or personal appointments scheduled in advance and held in an academy reception hall or lounge. Though the academy now furnishes him with an office and allows group meetings at the academy, it took two years and the help of a Roman Catholic chaplain before Bumpass could sponsor on-campus BSU activities.

Annually about 70 midshipmen actively participate in BSU at the academy, though, "we'll touch more than that," Bumpass said. "When you're doing a quality job you're also going to produce numbers." Yet he shies away from number counts, emphasizing statistics "only when they represent people."

Bumpass does face difficulties. Reaching one student often requires three to five phone calls before the student receives the message and returns his call. Bumpass also notes the personal frustration of watching a midshipman "who is sensitive and concerned about the Christian faith let his priorities become distorted."

A graduate of Texas A & M University, Bumpass thinks the undergraduate military school gave him an appreciation for "a lot of things about the military." Graduation from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and stints as an Oklahoma pastor and an Arkansas campus minister qualified him for missionary appointment to the academy by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Bumpass also directs Baptist student work at St. John's College and Anne Arundel Community College, two liberal arts colleges located near the academy.

When graduating midshipmen receive orders, Bumpass contacts Baptists in their assignment areas so that alumni "can be plugged into the ministry of a local church there." He also discusses possible ministries graduates can perform including serving as counselors for ships without chaplains.

Mostly, says Bumpass, he encourages midshipmen "to be functioning believers that God can speak to and through." As they embody Christ, he added, graduates can work for world peace by interpreting God's message of "'I love you' to others in ways they can understand."

-30-

(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press

WB

Anti-abortion Effort
Fails In U.S. Senate

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press
9/16/82

WASHINGTON (BP)--Senate efforts to pass tough anti-abortion legislation came to an abrupt halt when a rider pushed by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) was tabled shortly after Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) announced the withdrawal of his proposed constitutional amendment on abortion.

Those moves, along with a decision by Sen. Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.) not to bring his bill to the floor in the face of certain filibuster, dealt a triple defeat to anti-abortion forces who saw the conservative 97th Congress as their best chance in years of tightening restrictions on abortion. The Hatfield proposal would make current restrictions in federal funding of abortions permanent.

The Helms amendment, attached to a debt ceiling bill Congress must pass before Oct. 1 to keep the government functioning, would have permanently barred federal agencies from performing abortions and banned the use of federal funds to pay for abortion except to save the life of the mother.

Despite efforts by President Reagan in support of the amendment, Helms fell 10 votes short in his third try to cut off a filibuster on the amendment. Then a motion to table the measure narrowly prevailed, 47-46.

-more-

A second Helms amendment which would strip the Supreme Court and lower federal courts of jurisdiction in school prayer cases was pending the debt ceiling bill, but Sen. Lowell P. Wicker (R-Conn.) who joined Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) and Sen. Max S. Baucus (D-Mont.) in a filibuster against the abortion rider, vowed to continue the effort against the school prayer amendment. With majority leader Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.) planning to finish action on the measure by Sept. 17, chances of passing a debt ceiling bill without any controversial amendments appeared to be growing.

Hatch said he withdrew his amendment after Baker promised to bring the measure to the Senate floor for full debate early in the 98th Congress. His proposal, which would give states and Congress joint authority to restrict abortion, would have required approval by two-thirds votes in both houses of Congress and ratification by three-fourths of the states.

-30-

*

G

Cothen Says Bible Belief
Not 'Only' Vital Doctrine

By Norman Jameson

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Grady Cothen, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, delivered a personal emancipation proclamation and political statement to the president of the Southern Baptist Convention at dedication services for the newest Baptist Book Store Sept. 14.

While theological orthodoxy is "infinitely important" there is more to it than believing the Bible, Cothen told 200 people at the dedication banquet on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Belief in the Bible is "paramount" but there are issues on the other side of orthodoxy, including soul competency of the believer, free exercise of democracy and equal participation in a free church in a free state, he pointed out.

Soul competency includes freedom from coercion, Cothen said. Looking at Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr. seated beside him, Cothen said he suspected Draper has been subjected to intense persuasion efforts since he was elected in June.

Evidently still upset over hardball political tactics appearing in Southern Baptist life for the first time, Cothen said at the the New Orleans meeting of the SBC last summer, "we almost gave up the idea of having messengers in favor of delegates--the instructed ones."

Criticized with other SBC executives by one publication for voting "against the majority" on a number of resolutions that reversed long standing Baptist positions, Cothen said, "my bones trembled inside me and I thought if the direction of the SBC changes with every resolution we will have total and abysmal chaos in five years."

In effect declaring himself free from the restraints denominational office places on personal expression, Cothen said, "I'm about to retire so I say what I think. If they want to retire me early that's all right too. I'm ready to go fishing anytime."

If there is not equal participation in a church, if the pastor is a ruling autocrat, the membership dies for lack of spiritual exercise, Cothen said. "Autocracy may get things done, but it won't grow saints," he said.

Cothen emphasized the importance of a free church in a free state and said Southern Baptists "may be the last bastion of hope" to keep the church and religion in their proper spheres. "It frightens the daylights out of me" that a White House staff person admitted trying to influence the resolution process at the New Orleans annual meeting, he said.

"I distrust religious decisions by politicians as much as I distrust political decisions by religious professionals," Cothen added.

Cothen referred to the bookstore by saying: "Let there never come a day in Baptist life when we try to tell one another what to read; or come a day when we pile books together and burn them because we're afraid of error."

-30-

Baptists Helping Haitians
Edge Toward Better Life

By Mike Creswell

RB

PORT AU PRINCE, Haiti (BP)--Jack Hancox digs deeper than most general evangelists.

Although he preaches and works with many of the Baptist churches in Haiti, Hancox also drills a lot of water wells. A typical day will find him bumping along a rocky, rural road to check on a project to cap a spring or a health clinic being built by volunteers.

Jack and Doris Hancox are the only career Southern Baptist missionaries in a country where most citizens earn less than \$300 a year and the average life span is 45 years. They work through the Baptist Convention of Haiti and with missionaries from another convention (American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.), who have worked on the island for many years.

To increase output Hancox uses a steady stream of Southern Baptist volunteers from the United States for construction, spring capping and other work. "Work with volunteers is the hardest work I've ever done," Hancox admitted, but he applauds the volunteers. He expects and receives hard work from most of them. He appreciates their impact on their home churches and on the Haitians who are amazed to see Americans coming to help at their own expense and on vacation time.

Without volunteer help he couldn't have stretched his ministry to include water resource development, agricultural development and other nutritional and educational programs.

Water is a scarce, precious commodity in Haiti, but providing pure water is necessary for all other programs, Hancox explained. Over the past two years Hancox has helped drill about 50 wells; most are still working. Only three or four other Christian groups now have well-drilling operations in Haiti.

Southern Baptist hunger relief funds bought the Baptist well-drilling truck for just under \$100,000 and three young Christian Haitians operate it. They drill wells much more cheaply than can commercial firms. Hancox majors on drilling wells in isolated villages where no other groups are working. But he helps other Christian groups who can repay him for materials. He also provides water through spring capping--attaching a pump, covering the spring to keep it clean and piping the water to an accessible area.

A \$25,000 grant from the SBC Foreign Mission Board helped establish a poultry project on the Baptist convention's 36-acre agricultural station at Quartier Morin. The grant helped build three poultry sheds and technicians are being trained to go into villages within a 25-mile radius to help families establish poultry operations.

But the poultry project is only part of the agricultural station's work. Other workers experiment to find vegetables and animals which will grow well in Haiti. Trees are grown to determine which are best for replacing the forests which have been stripped for lumber and charcoal. Through another relief agency Hancox will get 12,000 seedlings and Southern Baptist relief funds will allow him to lease a 15-acre site near Mirebalais for six years on which to grow them.

Farmers will be brought to the nursery to see the possibilities of trees as barriers to wind erosion, nitrogen sources for the soil, cattle feed and income producers when sold for lumber or charcoal.

In another part of Haiti, Alexander Francois, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Petit Goave is trying to feed 500 children who attend the elementary school the church sponsors in Croix Hiliare community. The noon meal in the school's canteen program is about the only food most of them will get that day because food shipments from international relief agencies are irregular. Francois must feed half the children one day, half the next.

Most convention churches have feeding programs, many using Southern Baptist relief funds. The funds help each school get bowls, cups, spoons and other utensils and a storage locker. This nutrition program was part of a pilot project for Hancox but response from other churches was so great he is requesting increased funds to continue the effort.

The resulting program would include feeding as part of a holistic, church-centered approach to teach nutrition and other skills to help the congregation edge toward a better life.

-30-

(Adapted from the August 1982 edition of the Commission magazine)

(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Foreign Mission Board

CORRECTION: In (BP) story mailed dated 9/10/82--"Reagan on America: Nation 'Set Apart'"--please change identification of Alfred M. Landon in third graf. Landon was the Republican candidate for president in 1936, and was defeated by Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was not vice president.

Thanks,

Baptist Press